

NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION
CHARTER OF THE
ASTROPHYSICS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

1. Official Designation: Astrophysics Advisory Committee (APAC).

2. Authority: Having determined that it is in the public interest in connection with the performance of Agency duties under the law, the NASA Administrator hereby re-establishes the APAC, pursuant to the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA), as amended, 5 U.S.C., App. 2.

3. Objectives and Scope of Activities: The APAC shall draw on the expertise of its members to provide advice and make recommendations to the Director, Astrophysics Division, Science Mission Directorate, NASA Headquarters (hereinafter, "Director, Astrophysics Division") on astrophysics programs, policies, plans, and priorities. The APAC's recommendations and analysis can be used to inform decisions on the programmatic scope and priorities, as well as the implementation of astrophysics programs. In addition, the APAC will provide a regular forum for broad discussion of astrophysics and the role of astrophysics within and outside of NASA.

4. Description of Duties: The APAC shall function solely as an advisory body and comply with the provisions of the FACA. The APAC shall be supported by subcommittees/subordinate groups, as needed, to cover the breadth and depth of scope as determined by the Director, Astrophysics Division.

5. Official to Whom the Committee Reports: The APAC reports to the Director, Astrophysics Division.

6. Support: The Astrophysics Division will provide staff support for the APAC.

7. Estimated Annual Operating Costs and Staff Years: The Science Mission Directorate will provide the budget for operation of the APAC. The total estimated annual operating cost for the APAC is approximately \$250,000, including 1.0 full time equivalent for NASA staff support.

8. Designated Federal Officer: The Executive Secretary of the APAC shall be appointed by the Associate Administrator, Science Mission Directorate, and shall serve as the Designated Federal Officer (DFO). The DFO will be either a full-time or a permanent part-time employee, who will: call, attend, and adjourn committee and subcommittee/subordinate group meetings; approve agendas; maintain required records on costs and membership; ensure efficient operations; maintain records for availability to the public; and provide copies of the APAC reports to the NASA Advisory Committee Management Officer for forwarding to the Library of Congress. The Designated Federal Officer (DFO) will also coordinate with the members and subordinate group members, if any, and NASA's Office of the General Counsel (OGC) to ensure that all legal/ethics requirements are met.

With regard to Special Government Employees (SGEs) and Regular Government Employees (RGEs), these include, though are not limited to, timely filing of annual financial disclosure reports and annual ethics training by a representative of OGC and seeking advice from the NASA OGC Ethics Team for any questions concerning Government ethics requirements that may arise.

9. Estimated Number and Frequency of Meetings: The APAC shall meet two to four times a year or as required by the Director, Astrophysics Division. Meetings shall be open to the public unless it is determined in advance that the meeting, or a portion of the meeting, is not covered by FACA or will be closed in accordance with the Government in the Sunshine Act.

10. Duration: The APAC is envisioned to be a continuing entity with charter renewals.

11. Termination: The APAC terminates two years from the date of the filing of this charter unless renewed or terminated earlier by the NASA Administrator, after consultation with the Director, Astrophysics Division, and the Associate Administrator, Science Mission Directorate.

12. Membership and Designation: The APAC shall consist of members without compensation to be selected by the Director, Astrophysics Division, following the Associate Administrator, Science Mission Directorate's written consultation, per delegation of the Administrator. Appointment letter(s) and reappointment letter(s) will be signed by the Associate Administrator, Science Mission Directorate, per delegation of the NASA Administrator. The Director, Astrophysics Division, shall ensure a balanced representation in terms of the points of view represented and the functions to be performed. Diversity shall be considered as well. The APAC shall consist of 13-15 members for up to a three-year term, renewable at the discretion of the Director, Astrophysics Division; members may be SGEs, RGEs, or Representatives. The Director, Astrophysics Division, shall designate the Chair of the APAC after consultation with the Associate Administrator, Science Mission Directorate and the NASA Administrator, and this will be documented in the appointment letter or reappointment letter. The APAC Chair also will serve as a member of the Science Committee, NASA Advisory Council, and will be formally appointed to this position. The Director, Astrophysics Division, also shall select a Vice-Chair from among the members, in consultation with the APAC Chair.

13. Subcommittees: APAC subcommittees, ad hoc task forces, and other subordinate groups as needed, may be established or discontinued at the discretion of the Director, Astrophysics Division, following consultation with the Associate Administrator, Science Mission Directorate. No formal amendment(s) to this charter will be required to effect such change(s). The terms of reference for a subordinate group shall be subject to the approval of the Director, Astrophysics Division. Subordinate group chairs and members shall be appointed by the Director, Astrophysics Division, and members may be SGEs, RGEs, or Representatives. Any subordinate group will report back to the APAC and will not provide advice or work products directly to NASA.

14. Recordkeeping: The records of the APAC, or other subordinate groups of the APAC, shall be handled in accordance with the General Records Schedule 6.2, or other approved Agency records disposition schedule. These records shall be available for public inspection and copying, subject to the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. 552.

15. Filing Date: This charter shall become effective upon the filing of this charter with the appropriate U.S. Senate and House of Representatives oversight committees.



Bill Nelson
Administrator
National Aeronautics and Space Administration

September 3, 2021

Signature Date

September 7, 2021

Congressional Filing Date